

V. REMARKS

Claims 1, 2, 5 and 6 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Loose et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0087690) in view of Okada (U.S. Patent No. 6,620,044), Muir et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2005/0192090) and Ozaki et al. (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2001/0031658). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Loose teaches a spinning reel slot machine that includes a plurality of mechanical rotatable reels and a video display. The plurality of mechanical rotatable reels, in response to a wager, are rotated and stopped to randomly place symbols on the reels in visual association with a display area. A video display provides a video image superimposed upon the reels. The video display is a flat panel transmissive display positioned in front of the reels. The transmissive display is a liquid crystal display.

Okada discloses a gaming machine with a variable display for displaying principal graphical information corresponding to at least one of a plurality of principal graphical elements. Each principal graphical element has a predetermined significance in a principal game of the gaming machine. A secondary display displays secondary graphical information and is provided with a display portion positioned below the display portion of the variable display. A controller produces first control signals that control the variable display to display the principal graphical information as a sequential principal progression of the principal graphical elements and second control signals that control the secondary display to display the secondary graphical information. The secondary graphical information has a predetermined relationship to the sequential progression of the principal graphical elements. During the period of variation of the symbols in the variable display, a separate indication that is correlated to the control of the variation action of the variable display is performed by the secondary display. As a result, player monotony while waiting for the result of the game is greatly reduced. The display portion of the

secondary display is provided below the display portion of the variable display. Therefore, a player can watch the separate indication of the secondary display and the indication of the variable display substantially simultaneously over an extended period of time without fatigue.

Muir teaches a gaming machine display that includes a game playing arrangement mountable in a cabinet of a gaming machine and an electronically controlled display element overlying the game playing arrangement, in use, so that, depending on a state of the display element, the game playing arrangement is visible through the display element. The game playing arrangement has a mechanical, symbol-carrying arrangement. The symbol-carrying arrangement includes a set of rotatable mechanical reels with a plurality of symbols being arranged on an outer periphery of each reel. The display element has a display screen overlying the game playing arrangement. The display screen is a multi-layered structure and includes a monitor on which images are to be displayed. The monitor overlies a shutter mechanism.

Ozaki discloses a pattern display device that includes a pattern display unit and a front side display unit. The pattern display unit has a display portion for displaying a plurality of different first patterns with the pattern display unit being capable of performing a stationary display and a varying display. The front side display unit is disposed in front of the pattern display unit and is capable of displaying a plurality of different second patterns overlapping with the plurality of first patterns with the front side display unit being transparent except for the plurality of second patterns. The front side display unit has a matrix type display portion that displays the plurality of second patterns. The matrix type display portion is composed of a transparent EL panel.

Claim 1, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes game start instruction means for instructing a start of a game, determination means for determining symbols to be stopped after the start of the game and whether, during

the game, the determined symbols to be stopped is a winning combination of symbols, determination means for determining symbols to be stopped and whether or not a combination is won based on the symbols determined corresponding to a game start instruction command from the game start instruction means, game result display means for displaying a result concerning with the game determined by the determination means and beneficial state generating means for generating a beneficial state for a player when the determined symbols to be stopped are the winning combination of symbols. Claim 1 recites that the game result display means includes first display means and second display means arranged at a more front side than a display area of the first display means when seen from a front side of the gaming machine with the first display means including a plurality of rotatable reels with each reel having a plurality of symbols disposed circumferentially thereabout and the second display means has a plurality of symbol display areas with each symbol display area capable of transmittably displaying the game result displayed on the first display means therethrough and with each respective symbol display area sized to display at least one a plurality of symbols associated to a corresponding one of the plurality of reels. Claim 1 further recites that display control means is provided with the display control means controlling the second display means so as to display game information when the determined symbols to be stopped is the winning combination of symbols in an area including the symbol display area by changing the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area so as to become low after the game is initiated and before an entire game result is displayed on the first display means.

Additionally, claim 1 recites that after (a) the determination means determines the symbols to be stopped and (b) a combination of the stopped symbols is the winning symbol combination, at least one a plurality of symbols of the stopped reel is displayed through the symbol display area associated with the stopped reel and game information is superimposed via the second display means on the at least one of the plurality of displayed symbols of the stopped reel while at least a remaining

one of rotating reels continues to rotate with the game information notifying the player of a forthcoming winning result. Claim 1 also recites that the display control means controls the second display means so as to display the game information in the area including the symbol display area by changing the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area so as to become high. Furthermore, claim 1 recites that, when the light transmittance rate is low, the first display means becomes obstructed thereby emphasizing the displayed game information for a player to easily observe and, when the light transmittance rate is high, the first display means is easily viewed by the player to observe the game result.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 1 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest determination means, beneficial state generating means and display control means as now claimed. Specifically, the determination means determines symbols to be stopped after the start of the game and whether, during the game, the determined symbols to be stopped is a winning combination of symbols, the beneficial state generating generates a beneficial state for a player when the determined symbols to be stopped are the winning combination of symbols and the display control means controls the second display means so as to display game information when the determined symbols to be stopped is the winning combination of symbols. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that when the light transmittance rate is low, the first display means becomes obstructed thereby emphasizing the displayed game information for a player to easily observe and, when the light transmittance rate is high, the first display means is easily viewed by the player to observe the game result.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 1 is allowable over the applied art.

Claims 2, 5 and 6 depend from claim 1 and includes all of the features of claim 1. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claims are allowable at least for the reason claim 1 is allowable as well as for the features they recite.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claims 21 - 24 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Loose in view of Muir and Ozaki. The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Claim 21, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes a first display device including a plurality of rotatable reels with each reel having a plurality of symbols disposed circumferentially thereabout, a second display device arranged at a more front side than the first display device when seen from a front side of the gaming machine with the second display device including a plurality of symbol display areas with each symbol display area capable of transmittably displaying symbols on the first display device therethrough and each respective symbol display area sized to display at least one of a plurality of symbols associated to a corresponding one of the plurality of reels and a processor in communication with the first display device and the second display device. Claim 21 recites that the processor operates to determine the symbols to be stopped and determine whether the symbols to be stopped are a winning symbol combination. Further, claim 21 recites that, when the symbols to be stopped are a winning symbol combination, at least one of a plurality of symbols from the stopped reel are displayed through the symbol display area associated with the stopped reel and game information is superimposed via the second display device on the at least one of the plurality of displayed symbols of the stopped reel while at least a remaining one of a plurality of rotating reels continues to rotate with the game information notifying the player of a forthcoming winning result. Also, claim 21 recites that the processor controls the second display device so as to display the game information on the symbol display area by changing the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area with the light transmittance rate being one of high and low. Additionally, claim 21 recites that,

when the light transmittance rate is low, the first display device becomes obstructed thereby emphasizing the displayed game information for a player to easily observe and, when the light transmittance rate is high, the first display device is easily viewed by the player to observe the game result.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 21 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that, when the symbols to be stopped are a winning symbol combination, at least one of a plurality of symbols from the stopped reel are displayed through the symbol display area associated with the stopped reel and game information is superimposed via the second display device on the at least one of the plurality of displayed symbols of the stopped reel while at least a remaining one of a plurality of rotating reels continues to rotate and that the game information notifies the player of a forthcoming winning result. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art also fails to teach or suggest that the processor controls the second display device so as to display the game information in the plurality of symbol display areas by changing the light transmittance rate of the plurality of symbol display areas with the light transmittance rate being one of high and low and, when the light transmittance rate is low, the first display device becomes obstructed thereby emphasizing the displayed game information for a player to easily observe and, when the light transmittance rate is high, the first display device is easily viewed by the player to observe the game result.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 21 is allowable over the applied art.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

Claim 27 and 28 are rejected under 35 USC 103 (a) as being unpatentable over Loose et al. in view of Watanabe (U.S. Patent Application Publication No. 2003/0045346). The rejection is respectfully traversed.

Watanabe discloses a game machine that includes a first display, a second display and a game changer. The first display displays a plurality of spinning reels with each reel having a plurality of symbols. The second display displays a role playing game in which a character as an object of operation for a player acts in a virtual field and aims at a predetermined target. The a game changer, which changes a first game to a second game advantageous to the player on the first display, depends on whether or not the character as the operation object has achieved the predetermined target.

Claim 27, as amended, is directed to a gaming machine that includes game result display means for displaying a game result concerning with a game, beneficial state generating means for generating a beneficial state for a player when a specific game result is displayed on the game result display means, and internal winning combination determination means for determining an internal winning combination. Claim 27 recites that the game result display means includes first display means including plural reels each of which has symbols for displaying the game result represented by symbols of the reels and second display means arranged in front of the first display means when seen from a front side of the gaming machine and the second display means has a symbol display area light transmittance rate of which is changed so as to become high so that a player easily views the reels and the game result when the reels are rotating and the game result is displayed by the reels. Also, claim 27 recites that display control means is provided with the display control means controlling the second display means so as to display game information concerning with a specific winning combination determined as the internal winning combination by the internal winning combination determination means, within the symbol display area. Also, claim 27 recites that only when the specific winning combination is determined, the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is adjusted so as

to become low so that the game information is emphasized for ease of viewing by the player by obstructing the player's view of the game result displayed on the first display means when the game information is displayed within the symbol display area.

It is respectfully submitted that none of the applied art, alone or in combination, teaches or suggests the features of claim 27 as amended. Specifically, it is respectfully submitted that the applied art, alone or in combination, fails to teach or suggest that, only when the specific winning combination is determined, the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is adjusted so as to become low so that the game information is emphasized for ease of viewing by the player by obstructing the player's view of the game result displayed on the first display means when the game information is displayed within the symbol display area. Furthermore, it is respectfully submitted that the light transmittance rate of the symbol display area is adjusted so as to become low so that the game information is emphasized for ease of viewing by the player by obstructing the player's view of the game result displayed on the first display means when the game information is displayed within the symbol display area.

Thus, it is respectfully submitted that one of ordinary skill in the art could not combine the features of the applied art to arrive at the claimed invention because the applied art is devoid of all the features of the claimed invention. As a result, it is respectfully submitted that claim 27 is allowable over the applied art.

Claim 28 depends from claim 27 and includes all of the features of claim 27. Thus, it is respectfully submitted that the dependent claim is allowable at least for the reasons claim 27 is allowable as well as for the features it recites.

Withdrawal of the rejection is respectfully requested.

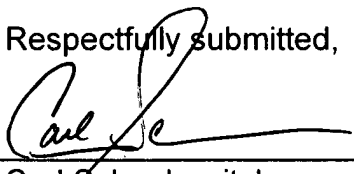
It is respectfully submitted that the pending claims are believed to be in condition for allowance over the prior art of record. Therefore, this Amendment is

believed to be a complete response to the outstanding Office Action. Further, Applicants assert that there are also reasons other than those set forth above why the pending claims are patentable. Applicants hereby reserve the right to set forth further arguments and remarks supporting the patentability of their claims, including the separate patentability of the dependent claims not explicitly addressed herein, in future papers.

In view of the foregoing, reconsideration of the application and allowance of the pending claims are respectfully requested. Should the Examiner believe anything further is desirable in order to place the application in even better condition for allowance, the Examiner is invited to contact Applicants' representative at the telephone number listed below.

Should additional fees be necessary in connection with the filing of this paper or if a Petition for Extension of Time is required for timely acceptance of the same, the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge Deposit Account No. 18-0013 for any such fees and Applicant(s) hereby petition for such extension of time.

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Enclosure(s): Amendment Transmittal
Petition for Extension of Time (one month)

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